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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 12 RIYADH 04906

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SUBJECT: THE ROLE OF SAUDI PRINCES IN UNIFORM

11. (S - ENTIRE TEXT.)

12. SUMMARY. THE PRESENCE OF A NUMBER OF SAUDI ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS IN THE MILITARY--WE CAN IDENTIFY MORE THAN 25 AND THERE ARE CLEARLY OTHERS--HAS LONG BEEN A SUBJECT OF INTEREST. ALSO THE FOCUS OF CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION HAS BEEN THE ROYAL FAMILY'S WELL CALCULATED EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN CAREFUL CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY, TO PRECLUDE ITS BECOMING A THREAT TO THE REGIME. THESE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN COMPLICATED IN RECENT YEARS BY THE OFTEN CONTRADICTORY DEMANDS FOR AN EFFICIENT, WELL EQUIPPED FORCE TO RESPOND TO REAL THREATS. A KEY QUESTION IS WHETHER THE PRINCELY PRESENCE IN THE MILITARY IS PART OF THE ROYAL FAMILY CONTROL MECHANISM. BUT THERE ARE ALSO OTHER IMPORTANT QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE ROYAL PRESENCE IN THE MILITARY: IF NOT THERE AS PART OF A CONCERTED EFFORT TO MAINTAIN ROYAL CONTROL, WHAT ARE THE ATTRactions OF THE MILITARY FOR PRINCES WHO APPEAR TO HAVE NO SHORTAGE OF CAREER CHOICES? WHAT IMPACT DO PRINCES IN UNIFORM HAVE ON MILITARY EFFICIENCY AND UNIT MORALE GIVEN THEIR SPECIAL STATUS?

THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE OF A GENERALLY CONCEIVED PLAN TO MAINTAIN PRINCELY CONTROL OF THE MILITARY, SPECIFICALLY IN THE PLACEMENT OF THE MOST SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY IN POSITIONS OF CIVILIAN CONTROL OVER ALL UNIFORMED ELEMENTS--DEFENSE, NATIONAL GUARD AND INTERIOR, INCLUDING ITS PARAMILITARY FORCES. GOING FURTHER, THE PREPONDERANCE OF PRINCELY PRESENCE IN THE LAND AND AIR FORCES, THE TWO STRONGEST ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY, AND THE KEY POSITIONS HELD BY CERTAIN OF THE UNIFORMED PRINCES, SUGGESTS A BROADER DESIGN FOR ROYAL PRESENCE AND CONTROL. BUT THERE ARE COUNTER SIGNALS, PROBABLY MOST IMPORTANT BEING REAL QUESTIONS AS TO HOW EFFECTIVE SUCH CONTROL MIGHT BE, GIVEN THE DIVERSITY OF INTERESTS WITHIN THE ROYAL FAMILY. JUNIOR PRINCES IN MANY CASES HAVE VERY LITTLE REASON TO FEAR THE IMPOSITION OF DIRECT CONTROLS FROM THE KING. OVERALL, IT IS OUR JUDGEMENT THAT THERE IS MORE APPEARANCE THAN REALITY TO THE CONCEPT OF MILITARY PRINCES, BELOW THE VERY TOP LEVELS, BEING CAREFULLY PLACED WITH THE AIM OF ENHANCING FAMILY CONTROL. THIS JUDGEMENT IS REINFORCED BY OTHER SOLID ALTERNATIVE REASONS FOR PRINCES TO JOIN THE MILITARY: GLAMOUR AND EXCITEMENT, THE HISTORICALLY HONORABLE STATUS OF MILITARY SERVICE, BUSINESS SPIN-OFFS FROM THE LARGE MILITARY BUDGET, AND EVEN USE OF THE MILITARY AS A STEPPING STONE FOR BIGGER THINGS. WHILE IT IS DIFFICULT TO JUDGE THE DEGREE TO WHICH PRINCES EXERT A STABILIZING EFFECT IN THE MILITARY, THEIR MERE PRESENCE SHOULD BE OF SOME BENEFIT TO THE REGIME. HAVING PRINCES IN THE ARMED FORCES, REGARDLESS OF THEIR MOTIVES FOR BEING THERE, DOES PROVIDE A CERTAIN DEGREE OF INFLUENCE AND OVERSIGHT.

AS FOR THE IMPACT OF UNIFORMED PRINCES ON MILITARY MORALE AND EFFICIENCY, THIS CUTS BOTH WAYS. CLEARLY, THEY DO COMMAND SPECIAL TREATMENT AND ARE LESS BOUND

BY MILITARY DISCIPLINE, WITH RESULTING RESENTMENT. BUT SPECIAL TREATMENT IS NOT LIMITED TO PRINCES IN THE MILITARY; STRICT MILITARY DISCIPLINE IS NOT IN THE OVERALL SAUDI TRADITION; AND A NUMBER OF THE MILITARY PRINCES MORE THAN BALANCE THE NEGATIVES WITH THE HIGH QUALITY OF THEIR MILITARY ABILITY. END SUMMARY.

13. INTRODUCTION. WHEN WE SPEAK OF MILITARY FORCES IN SAUDI ARABIA, WE ARE SPEAKING ABOUT FORCES UNDER THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION (MODA), THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD (SANG) AS WELL AS THE SECURITY FORCES, FRONTIER FORCES AND COAST GUARD ELEMENTS OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (MOI). HOWEVER, FOR PURPOSES OF DISCUSSING THE ROLE OF PRINCES IN THE MILITARY, THIS REPORT IS CONFINED TO THE TWO MORE CLASSICAL MILITARY INSTITUTIONS, THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION AND THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT DRAWS HEAVILY ON THE U.S. SECURITY ASSISTANCE ELEMENTS IN SAUDI ARABIA, CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL WHO DEAL WITH THE ARMED FORCES AS WELL AS THE EXPERIENCES OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL. IT IS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO UNDERTAKE ANY MEANINGFUL EFFORT TO PLUMB THE SAUDI PUBLIC OR MILITARY CONCERNING THEIR OWN, PERSONAL FEELINGS. SOCIAL PRESSURE, CULTURAL BIAS, FEAR OF REPRISAL AND PLAIN DISTRUST OF FOREIGNERS ARE POWERFUL IMPEDIMENTS TO DIRECT INFORMATION GATHERING. WE RECOGNIZE THEREFORE THAT OUR LIST OF PRINCES IS NOT COMPLETE, THAT THERE ARE PROBABLY OTHER FACTORS WE MAY NOT HAVE GIVEN THEIR PROPER EMPHASES, AND THAT SUBJECTIVITY MUST ENTER INTO OUR JUDGEMENTS. HOWEVER, NOTWITHSTANDING THESE DISADVANTAGES, THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE BEST PICTURE AVAILABLE OF THE ROLE OF PRINCES IN THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES AND REPRESENTS A STARTING POINT ON THIS USEFUL SUBJECT.

14. THE PRESENCE OF MORE THAN 25 UNIFORMED PRINCES IN THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES RAISES A NUMBER OF INTERESTING QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE ROLE PLAYED BY THESE ROYAL OFFSPRING. HOW THESE PRINCES AFFECT THE STABILITY OF THE MILITARY AS WELL AS THEIR INFLUENCE ON ITS EFFICIENCY AND CREDIBILITY AS A FIGHTING FORCE ARE PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS. IS ROYAL MILITARY SERVICE THE RESULT, TO A GREATER OR LESSER DEGREE, OF AN ORCHESTRATED PLAN BY THE ROYAL FAMILY TO MAINTAIN A DIVERSIFIED PRESENCE IN AND CHECK ON THE MILITARY? WHY WOULD A PRINCE, WHO SUPPOSEDLY HAS EVERYTHING HE COULD POSSIBLY WANT, JOIN THE MILITARY? HOW ENCUMBERED BY MILITARY DISCIPLINE IS HE? WHAT IS THE EFFECT ON UNIT MORALE AND DISCIPLINE WHEN A PRINCE JOINS THE OUTFIT? DO THESE PRINCES HAVE MUCH INFLUENCE OVER MILITARY DECISION MAKING? IF SO, HOW FAR DOES THEIR AUTHORITY EXTEND INTO POLICY MAKING? DO THEY "ROUGH IT" OR ARE THEY A PRIVILEGED LOT RELATIVELY EXEMPT FROM UNDERGOING HARDSHIP?

15. THE SAUDIS ARE EXTREMELY SECRETIVE ABOUT THEIR ROYAL AFFAIRS, AS THEY ARE ABOUT THE DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT, AND IT IS THEREFORE DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE EXACTLY HOW MANY PRINCES ARE IN MILITARY SERVICE. THE FOLLOWING LIST NOTES THOSE WHOSE DUTIES HAVE BROUGHT THEM TO THE MISSION'S ATTENTION OR WHO WERE INTRODUCED IN CHANCE MEETINGS. ONE FURTHER DIFFICULTY IN DETERMINING WHO IS OR IS NOT A PRINCE IS THE COMMONALITY OF NAMES. WHILE SOME ARE RELATED CLOSELY ENOUGH TO ABDUL AZIZ FOR THEIR ANCESTRY TO BE APPARENT, EACH GENERATION ADDS ANOTHER LAYER OF NAMES, CAUSING FAMILY ORIGIN TO BE INCREASINGLY OBSCURED TO OUTSIDERS. SOME PREVIOUSLY KNOWN OFFICERS HAVE DROPPED OUT OF SIGHT. THIS LIST IS THEREFORE NOT ALL INCLUSIVE. BESIDES THE UNIFORMED PRINCES CONTAINED IN THE LIST, THERE ARE ALSO A LARGE NUMBER OF CIVILIAN PRINCES IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY IN ALL THE MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS.

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-SAUDI ARABIAN LAND FORCES (SALF)-----

NAME	RANK/POSITION (IF KNOWN)
AHMED B. SALMAN B. ABDUL AZIZ	
BADR B. FAHD AL SAUD AL KABIR	LTC, MODA STAFF
BANDAR B. FAHD B. KHALID B.	
- MUHAMMED B. ABDUL RAHMAN	COL. DIR. AL KLHARJ
-	ORDNANCE FACTORY
FAYSAL B. MUHAMMED B. SAUD	
- AL KABIR	BG, CDR SALF AVIATION
FAYSAL B. JALAWI	CPT, MILITARY POLICE
FAYSAL B. MUSAID B. ABDUL RAHMAN	CPT MILITARY POLICE
KHALID B. BANDAR B. ABDUL AZIZ	G-3 ARMOR CORPS
MUHAMMED B. NASSIR B. ABDUL	
- AZIZ	COL. DEP CDR. INFANTRY
SULTAN B. FAHD B. ABDUL AZIZ	MAJ. POS. UKN. (KING'S
-	SON)
TURKI B. ABDULLAH AL FAYSAL B.	
- ABDUL AZIZ	
TURKI B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED	
- B. ABDUL RAHMAN	MAJ, CDR OF MP BN
-	CENTRAL REGION
FAHD B. BADR B. ABDUL AZIZ	LT, AIRBORNE BDE

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-ROYAL SAUDI AIR FORCE (RSAF)-----

ABDUL RAHMAN B. FAHD AL FAYSAL	
- AL FARHAN	LTC, BASE CDR, TABUK
BANDAR B. FAYSAL B. ABDUL AZIZ	COL, DIR. AIR
-	INSPECTIONS
BANDAR B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED AL	
- SAUD AL KABIR	F-15 PILOT
FAYSAL B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED	
- B. ABDUL RAHMAN	
MANSUR B. BANDAR B. ABDUL AZIZ	LTC, F-15 WING CDR,
-	DHAHRAN
MUHAMMED B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED	
- B. ABDUL RAHMAN	
TURKI B. NASSIR B. ABDUL AZIZ	COL. BASE CDR, DHAHRAN
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-ROYAL SAUDI NAVAL FORCES (RSNF)-----

FAHD B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED	CAPTAIN
- B. ABDUL RAHMAN	DEPUTY CDR, RSNF
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-ROYAL SAUDI AIR DEFENSE FORCES (RSADF)-----

KHALID B. SULTAN B. ABDUL AZIZ	BG, DEP CDR, RSADF,
-	SON OF MIN DEF

KHALID B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED	
- B. ABDUL RAHMAN	
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- SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD

MITIEB B. ABDULLAH B.	
- ABDUL AZIZ	COL, CDR, SANG MILITARY
TURKI B. ABDULLAH B.	
MOHAMMED AL SAUD AL KABIR	MAJOR, S-3, 3D CAB,
-	1ST BDE, SANG
FAYSAL B. MISHARI B.	
ABDUL AZIZ	1LT, ASST. S-3, 3D CAB.
-	1ST BDE, SANG
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-	(CAB-COMBINED ARMS BN.)

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-FORMER OFFICER PRINCES OF NOTE-----

BANDAR B. FAHD B. SAAD II	BUSINESS
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FAHD B. ABDULLAH B. MUHAMMED - AL SAUD AL KABIR	DEPUTY MINISTER FOR CIVIL AVIATION AFFAIRS
FAYSAL B. MISHAL B.A.A.	BUSINESS
MUQRIN B.A.A.	GOVERNOR OF HAIL
SAUD B. ABDULLAH B. FAYSAL B.A.A.	BUSINESS
FAYSAL B. BANDAR B.A.A.	DEP. GOV. OF ASIR
BANDAR B. SULTAN	AMB. TO USA
MUHAMMED B. SAAD B.A.A. -	VICE GOV. OF QASSIM PROVINCE
ABDUL RAHMAN AL FAYSAL -B. ABDUL AZIZ - .	FORMER ARMOR PROJECT CDR., RETIRED FOR HEALTH REASONS.
-FORMER OFFICER PRINCES OUT OF CONTACT-----	
ABDUL MALIK B. MUHAMMED AL -AL SHAYKH -	LAST KNOWN RANK. MAJ., SALF
KHALID B. BANDAR B. -ABDUL AZIZ	MAJOR, Salf (?)
KHALID B. FAYSAL B. TURKI -B. ABDUL AZIZ -	MAJOR, HAWK BN RSADF (?)
AHMED B. NASSIR B. ABDUL AZIZ	MAJ. RSAF (?)
FAHD B. ABDUL RAHMAN B. ABDUL -AZIZ MISH'ALB. SAUD B. ABDUL AZIZ	RSAF INTEL OFFICER (?) (?)
SA'AD B. FAHD B. MUHAMMED -B. ABDUL AZIZ	PROBABLY TABUK AIR BASE
BANDAR B. FAHD B. MUHAMMED <u>1</u> B. ABDUL AZIZ	
BANDAR AL THUNAYAN AL SAUD	CPT, SANG (?)
SA'AD B. SAUD B. ABDUL RAHMAN	LT, SANG (?)
TURKI AL THUNAYAN AL SAUD	LT, SANG (?)

16. IT IS INEVITABLE THAT, WITH THE SAUDI ROYAL FAMILY NOW ESTIMATED TO NUMBER MORE THAN 5,000 MALE MEMBERS, SOME OF THESE PRINCES SHOULD FIND THEIR WAY INTO THE ARMED FORCES. IT IS EASY TO UNDERSTAND THE ROLE PLAYED BY THE SENIOR PRINCES; THEY ARE THE MINISTERS AND SENIOR FUNCTIONARIES AT THE VERY TOP OF THE VARIOUS MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS, ENSURING POLITICAL CONTROL AND RESPONSIVENESS. MORE DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND IS THE PLACE AND PURPOSE OF JUNIOR PRINCES IN MILITARY SERVICE, THOSE IN UNIFORM AND STARTING, AT LEAST, AS JUNIOR OFFICERS. SINCE THE LOYALTY OF ITS ARMED FORCES HAS A CLEAR IMPACT ON THE STABILITY OF AL SAUD RULE, AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE "ROYAL CONNECTION" WITH MILITARY SERVICE IS USEFUL IN JUDGING HOW THE ROYAL FAMILY FEELS ABOUT AND DEALS WITH ITS MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT, AND HOW NON-ROYAL OFFICERS VIEW THEIR AL SAUD COMRADES IN ARMS. END INTRODUCTION.

17. THE AL SAUD MONARCHY IS HIGHLY CONSCIOUS OF THE UTILITY OF A MODERN MILITARY FORCE AND HAS SPENT BILLIONS IN AN EFFORT TO CREATE ONE. A WELL-TRAINED AND SUPERBLY-EQUIPPED MILITARY FORCE IS NOT ONLY VITAL TO THE DEFENSE OF THE FRONTIERS, RESOURCES AND RULING

REGIME IN SAUDI ARABIA AGAINST OUTSIDE AGGRESSION BUT IS ALSO USEFUL AS A SYMBOL OF SAUDI NATIONALISM-- FOSTERING POPULAR ATTACHMENT TO THE AL SAUD DYNASTY, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM OLDER FOCAL POINTS OF LOYALTY AND MOTIVATION SUCH AS ARAB LINEAGE OR ISLAMIC FAITH. HOWEVER, THE AL SAUD DYNASTS HAVE SEEN MUSLIM MONARCHIES FALL TO COUPS D'ETAT MOUNTED BY MILITARY OFFICERS. THE HISTORY OF THE REGION OFFERS MANY EXAMPLES, SUCH AS EGYPT, IRAQ, AND LIBYA, IN WHICH THE ARMED FORCES OF THE COUNTRY, STRENGTHENED AND MODERNIZED, HAVE OVERTHROWN THE MONARCHIAL REGIME THEY WERE ESTABLISHED TO DEFEND. THUS THE SURVIVAL OF THE REGIME REQUIRES THAT CIVILIANS--READ MEMBERS OF THE RULING FAMILY--MAINTAIN TIGHT CONTROL OVER THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT. THE REGIME HAS PUT THIS FAMILIAR PRINCIPLE INTO PRACTICE BY ENSURING THAT FAMILY MEMBERS SIT FIRMLY AT THE APEX OF EVERY MILITARY OR QUASI-MILITARY COMMAND PYRAMID--WHETHER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION (MODA), THE NATIONAL GUARD, OR THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR.

18. GIVEN THESE SAME CONCERNS IT IS ALSO NOT SURPRISING THAT, UNTIL FAIRLY RECENTLY, THE RULERS OF SAUDI ARABIA DID VERY LITTLE TO IMPROVE THEIR ARMED FORCES EITHER QUANTITATIVELY OR QUALITATIVELY. THEY WERE CONTENT TO ALLOW THE ESTABLISHMENT OF ONLY A MODEST MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION (MODA) AND MAINTAINED ONLY AN ANTIQUATED NATIONAL GUARD. BUT THIS VIEW BEGAN TO CHANGE IN THE EARLY SIXTIES. IN THE FACE OF WHAT THEY VIEWED AS NASSIRITE AGGRESSION FROM THE YEMEN, THE AL SAUD WERE FORCED TO RECOGNIZE THE VULNERABILITY OF THEIR OWN REGIME TO OUTSIDE MILITARY THREATS. THEY BEGAN A MODEST ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE THEIR DEFENSE FORCES AND NATIONAL GUARD WHICH (WITH THE HELP OF NEW OIL WEALTH) BECAME A MAJOR EFFORT TO EXPAND AND UPGRADE ALL ELEMENTS OF THE MILITARY. VAST BUILDING PROJECTS AND THE ACQUISITION OF SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY HAVE BEEN A MAJOR SAG PREOCCUPATION FROM 1974 TO THE PRESENT.

19. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS LIMITED SAUDI PARTICIPATION IN FIGHTING IN THE GOLAN IN 1973, IT WAS THE WAR BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ WHICH FORCED THE SAG TO COME TO TERMS WITH SOME OF THE REALITIES OF MODERN COMBAT. ALL THE NEW EQUIPMENT IN THE WORLD IS OF LITTLE VALUE WITHOUT A COHESIVE OFFICER CORPS CAPABLE OF MAKING QUICK, SOPHISTICATED USE OF THEIR WEAPONRY. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS IS PRECISELY THE SORT OF MILITARY ORGANIZATION BEST SUITED, AND HENCE MORE LIKELY, TO SEEK POWER IN ITS OWN RIGHT. THE AL SAUD HAVE ACCEPTED THE NEED TO DEVELOP THE COMMAND, CONTROL, COORDINATION AND STAFFING MECHANISMS NEEDED TO OPERATE A MODERN MILITARY FORCE. PEACE SHIELD, THE SAUDIS' MULTIBILLION DOLLAR C3 PROGRAM FOR AIR DEFENSE, MAY EVENTUALLY LINK THE AIR DEFENSE COMMAND, RSAF AND ROYAL SAUDI NAVY, BUT THIS PROGRAM DOES NOT BEGIN TO TACKLE THE QUESTION OF COMBINED ARMS OPERATIONAL CONTROL. IT ADDRESSES WHAT UNQUESTIONABLY IS THE GREATEST CURRENT THREAT PERCEIVED BY THE SAUDI REGIME, THAT OF AN AIR ATTACK AGAINST THEIR PETRO-INDUSTRIAL-DESALINATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE. HOWEVER, IMPLEMENTATION EVEN OF THIS PROGRAM HAS BEEN SLOW AND A SYSTEM WHICH INTEGRATES ALL THE MILITARY SERVICES, LET ALONE MODA AND THE SANG, IS A LONG WAY OFF. FURTHER STEPS FACILITIATING MILITARY COORDINATION BETWEEN SERVICES AND ITS TRANSFER OUT OF THE HANDS OF PRINCELY AUTHORITY AND INTO THOSE OF A MILITARY GENERAL STAFF DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE IN THE CARDS.

110. WARY THAT A STRONG, COHESIVE MILITARY MIGHT POSE A THREAT TO THEIR RULE, THE AL SAUD TREAT EVERY BRANCH OF THE MILITARY AS A SEPARATE ENTITY WITH ITS OWN EQUIPMENT, GARRISON AND DISTINCT LINES OF COMMAND AND CONTROL. THUS THE ARMY, NAVY AND AIR FORCE ARE HAMPERED BY INCOMPATIBILITY OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT, SPARE PARTS AND AMMUNITION AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, MUTUAL DISTRUST SOMETIMES BORDERING ON DISDAIN. THE NATIONAL GUARD AND MINISTRY OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION HAVE BUT

LIMITED CONTACT WITH EACH OTHER, LITTLE CHANCE AT INTEROPERABILITY, AND NO PROVISIONS FOR JOINT OPERATIONS EXCEPT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE BROADEST MISSION STATEMENTS. ARMY FORCES ARE ALL GARRISONED WELL AWAY FROM THE CAPITAL. THE ONLY GROUND FORCES NEAR RIYADH BELONG TO THE NATIONAL GUARD. RIYADH AIRBASE HAS NO FIGHTER SQUADRONS. IT IS A FAIR ASSESSMENT TO SAY THAT THE SAUDI REGIME HAS TRIED TO ACHIEVE A DELICATE BALANCE, HAVING THE MILITARY CAPABILITY AND EFFICIENCY TO MEET POTENTIAL EXTERNAL THREATS, BUT NOT SO MUCH AS TO ENDANGER THE ROYAL FAMILY'S OWN DOMESTIC POSITION.

¶11. BUT ARE THE PRINCES IN THE MILITARY AN ELEMENT OF THE SAME CONTROL PROCESS? DOES THEIR PRESENCE HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE REGIME'S SECURITY, ON THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ARMED FORCES, ON MILITARY MORALE? DO SENIOR PRINCES WITH MINISTERIAL POSITIONS CAREFULLY PLACE THEIR JUNIORS IN KEY, UNIFORMED JOBS? THE COMPLEXITY OF AL SAUD FAMILY POLITICS MAKES HIGHLY SPECULATIVE ANY ATTEMPT TO INFER THE ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL THAT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PLACE OFFICERS INTO KEY POSITIONS IN THE MILITARY SUITABLE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF A WATCHDOG ROLE. MOREOVER, FAR FROM BEING A MONOLITHIC ORGANIZATION, THE AL SAUD FAMILY IS A SPRAWLING ENTITY WITH AN ARRAY OF DISCRETE AND SOMETIMES COMPETITIVE INTERESTS; COHESION AND INTERNAL CONTROL ARE A MAJOR PREOCCUPATION OF THE SENIOR-MOST PRINCES.

¶12. UNQUESTIONABLY, THERE ARE REASONS WHY PRINCES MIGHT PLAY A ROLE IN THE MILITARY BY DESIGN. GIVEN AN ABUNDANCE OF WELL-EDUCATED, LOYAL PRINCES, A LOGICAL MOVE FOR THE AL SAUD TO MAKE WOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE SOME OF THESE YOUNG MEN TO JOIN THE MILITARY. SUCH MEN, IMBUED AS THEY ARE WITH A VESTED SELF-INTEREST IN THE REGIME, COULD SERVE AS ITS EYES AND EARS AND ALSO EXERT AN INFLUENCE ON THE REST OF THE OFFICER CORPS. CLEARLY THE TOP ECHELON OF THE SAG IS COMPOSED ENTIRELY OF PRINCES. KING FAHD BIN ABDUL AZIZ IS THE SUPREME COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES. HE EXERCISES CONTROL OVER THE REGULAR MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT THROUGH HIS FULL BROTHER, SULTAN BIN ABDUL AZIZ, MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND AVIATION. WHILE THE KING IS ALSO NOMINAL CHIEF OF THE SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD, HIS HALF BROTHER, ABDULLAH BIN ABDUL AZIZ, IS ITS COMMANDER. THE KING WOULD PROBABLY HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY IN EXERTING ARBITRARY AUTHORITY OVER ABDULLAH, ESPECIALLY IN MATTERS AFFECTING THE SANG. DECISIONS ARE OFTEN MADE WITH SENIOR FAMILY AGREEMENT. SINCE SURVIVAL OF THE REGIME IS THE AL SAUD FAMILY'S FIRST IMPERATIVE, THERE IS LITTLE VISIBLE SIGN OF DISHARMONY. AS CROWN PRINCE AND THUS FAHD'S PUTATIVE SUCCESSOR, STABILITY OF THE REGIME IS ALSO VERY MUCH IN ABDULLAH'S PERSONAL INTEREST.

¶13. MANY SEEMINGLY INFLUENTIAL POSITIONS BELOW THE CIVILIAN POLITICAL DIRECTION LEVEL ARE HELD BY PRINCES. UNTIL RECENTLY, THE DIRECTOR OF AIR OPERATIONS FOR THE RSAF WAS A PRINCE. TWO OF THE FIGHTER BASE COMMANDERS ARE PRINCES. (A THIRD IS COMMANDED BY AN AL-SUDAIRY, ONE OF THE FAMILIES LONG ASSOCIATED WITH THE ROYAL FAMILY (SEE PARA 16). WHILE OFTEN ADDRESSED AS "PRINCE," AND CLEARLY POSSESSING EXCELLENT ROYAL CONNECTIONS, EARLIER REPORTS OFFICIALLY LABELING COL AHMED BIN MUSAID AL-SUDAIRY AS A PRINCE WERE IN ERROR.) A NUMBER OF THE MILITARY POLICE LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN THE ARMY ARE HELD BY PRINCES AS WELL. THE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE NAVY IS A PRINCE. IN THE SANG, THE MOST POLITICIZED OF THE SERVICES, WE FIND NOT ONLY THE TOP TWO POSITIONS HELD BY CIVILIANS BUT ALSO CIVILIAN PRINCES IN KEY ROLES AS THE SANG COMMANDERS IN THE WESTERN PROVINCE, ABDULLAH'S SON KHALID, THE EASTERN PROVINCE, MISHARI BIN SAUD, AS WELL AS OTHERS IN MORE REMOVED FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS.

¶14. MOST PRINCES IN UNIFORM ARE OFFICERS IN THE RSAF AND THE ARMY (SAUDI ARABIAN LAND FORCES, OR SALF), THE TWO ELEMENTS OF THE ARMED FORCES MOST CAPABLE OF



MOUNTING A THREAT TO AL SAUD RULE. PRINCES ARE MORE COMMON IN THE OFFICER RANKS OF THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS THAN IN ALL THE OTHERS (NAVY, SANG, MOI QUASI-MILITARY FORCES). IF PRINCES ARE IN THE ARMED FORCES TO FULFILL AN OVERSIGHT ROLE, THEY ARE CERTAINLY IN THE RIGHT BRANCHES OF THE SERVICE.

¶15. BUT IF THERE ARE THESE INDICATIONS SUPPORTING THE CONCEPT OF DIRECTED ROYAL PLACEMENT IN THE MILITARY, THERE IS MUCH CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE ALSO TENDING TO SUPPORT THE VIEW THAT THE PRESENCE AND PLACEMENT OF PRINCES IN THE MILITARY REFLECTS INDIVIDUAL INCLINATION AND AMBITION AS MUCH AS--OR MORE THAN--THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PUTATIVE PROTECTION PLAN ELABORATED BY THE AL SAUD. PRINCES FREELY REFUSE ASSIGNMENTS AND APPEAR TO BE FREE TO LEAVE THE SERVICE IF THEY DESIRE TO DO SO. THE AL SAUD LEADERSHIP APPEARS TO BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT PUSHING PRINCES TOO FAR TOO FAST AS WELL. PROMOTIONS INTO THE GENERAL OFFICER RANKS HAVE ONLY RECENTLY BEEN MADE. BREAKING THE PROMOTION ICE WAS COL. FAHD B. ABDULLAH, FORMER RSAF DIRECTOR OF AIR OPERATIONS, WHO BECAME SAUDI ARABIA'S FIRST PRINCE TO BE PROMOTED THROUGH THE OFFICER RANKS TO BRIGADIER GENERAL IN JANUARY 1984. THIS PROMOTION WAS LATER FOLLOWED BY THE PROMOTIONS OF COL. FAYSAL B. MUHAMMED, SALT AVIATION CHIEF, AND KHALID B. SULTAN, DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE RSADF.

¶16. THERE IS ALSO A QUESTION AS TO WHETHER ROYAL CONTROL IS REALLY FURTHERED THROUGH A PRINCELY PRESENCE. ABDUL AZIZ FATHERED 45 ACKNOWLEDGED SONS FROM AT LEAST 22 WIVES. THE SURVIVORS AMONG THESE SONS, TOGETHER WITH THEIR OWN OFFSPRING, HAVE, OVER THE YEARS, ESTABLISHED INFORMAL BLOCKS COMPOSED GENERALLY OF GROUPINGS OF FULL-BROTHERS BUT ALSO INCLUDING HALF-BROTHER ALLIES. TO THESE MUST BE ADDED THE SONS OF ABDUL AZIZ'S RELATIVES WHOSE FAMILIES CONSTITUTE THE AL SAUD CADET BRANCHES, AND THE CHILDREN OF LONG TIME ASSOCIATES NOW MARRIED INTO THE GREATER FAMILY. THESE LATTER GROUPS ARE IN AN AMBIGUOUS, AMBIVALENT POSITION: WHILE MANY AL SHAYKH AND AL SUDAIRY DAUGHTERS CONTINUE TO MARRY YOUNG SCIONS OF THE AL SAUD, MALE MEMBERS OF THESE FAMILIES OFTEN EXHIBIT--AND SOMETIMES ARE REMINDED BY THE AL SAUD--THAT THEIR LINEAGE IS DISTANT. THIS DIVERSIFICATION OF FAMILY GROUPINGS, WITH THEIR CONCOMITANT LOYALTIES, COMPLICATES THE ROYAL PRESENCE IN THE ARMED FORCES AND REFLECTS AMONG THE UNIFORMED PRINCES A DIVERSITY OF ROLES, INTERESTS AND ASPIRATIONS. THIS DIVERSITY IMPOSES LIMITS TO THE DEGREE OF CONTROL AVAILABLE TO THE SENIOR PRINCES THROUGH THE PRESENCE OF PRINCES IN THE MILITARY. IT IS SIMILARLY FLAWED EVEN AS AN INFORMATION/INTELLIGENCE CONDUIT. OFFICER PRINCES ARE OFTEN ABLE TO AVOID SUBJUGATING THEIR PERSONAL GOALS AND AMBITIONS TO THE DESIRES OF THEIR MORE REMOVED UNCLES AND COUSINS.

¶17. CONTROL AMONG THE SENIOR PRINCES IS COMPLICATED ENOUGH (SEE PARA 12). IT IS EVEN MORE SO AMONG THE JUNIORS. THE PRINCES ALL APPEAR TO BE LOYAL TO THE REGIME. WHILE THERE MAY BE A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT SELF-INTERESTS AMONG THEM, ALL THE PRINCES ARE DEPENDENT ON THE MONARCHY FOR THEIR STATION IN LIFE. COMPLICATIONS BEGIN WHEN WE EXAMINE THE MAKEUP OF THE ROYAL FAMILY AND SEE THAT WHILE MANY BEAR THE TITLE OF PRINCE, ALL PRINCES ARE NOT EQUAL. THIS LACK OF EQUALITY OFTEN BRINGS WITH IT A WIDE RANGE OF PRIORITIES IN LIFE. SOME PRINCES, MOSTLY FROM THE MORE DISTANT BRANCHES OF THE FAMILY, ARE LESS CONCERNED WITH POWER POLITICS AND MORE WITH JUST PLAIN UPWARD MOBILITY. UNABLE TO ASPIRE TO THE HIGHEST OFFICES IN THE LAND, THESE PRINCES HOLD A WIDE VARIETY OF OTHER ASPIRATIONS AND AMBITIONS. FIRST PRIORITY FOR THESE MEN CAN BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS, THE SECURING OF A CONTRACT, THE PURCHASE OF NEW

EQUIPMENT OR THE OPENING OF A NEW BRANCH OFFICE, JUST AS MUCH AS THE SECURING OF A MILITARY PROMOTION OR NEW, BETTER POSITION. THE REGIME APPEARS TO BE FAIRLY TOLERANT OF THIS ATTITUDE.

¶18. IN SUM, WE CAN SAY THAT AT THE VERY TOP OF THE CHAIN OF COMMAND--THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL--PRINCES HAVE BEEN GIVEN ABSOLUTE CONTROL OVER THE ARMED FORCES AND OPERATE THOSE FORCES VERY MUCH WITH THE SURVIVAL OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE REGIME IN MIND. AS WE GO FARTHER DOWN THE CHAIN OF COMMAND, WE FIND A NUMBER OF PRINCES WHOSE REASON FOR BEING THERE IS MUCH MORE OBSCURE. HOWEVER, IF THEY ARE NOT SPENDING A GREAT DEAL OF TIME LOOKING AFTER THE INTERESTS OF THE REGIME, THEY AT LEAST GIVE OUTSIDERS THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY MIGHT BE. THUS THE REGIME PROBABLY PROFITS MORE FROM THE PERCEPTION THAN THE REALITY, AND MORE SO AMONG THE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY THAN INSIDERS. ALTHOUGH SOME PRINCES ARE IN POSITIONS FROM WHERE THEY CAN OVERSEE THE GOINGS ON IN THE MILITARY, THERE ARE ENOUGH KEY POSITIONS FILLED BY COMMONERS AND, SIMILARLY, ENOUGH POSITIONS FILLED BY PRINCES WHERE THERE IS RELATIVELY LITTLE CONTROL OR OVERSIGHT TO CAST DOUBT THAT THE AL SAUD MAKE ANYTHING MORE THAN A HALF-HEARTED ATTEMPT TO POSITION THEIR TRUSTED SONS IN KEY JOBS. SELECTIONS APPEAR TO BE BASED ON THE PRINCES' INDIVIDUAL DESIRES, AND THE AVAILABILITY OF POSITIONS AT A GIVEN TIME.

¶19. IF PRINCES ARE NOT IN THE MILITARY TO ACT PRIMARILY AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REGIME, WHY THEN ARE THEY THERE? FIRST OF ALL, THERE ARE NOT MANY JOBS THAT A PRINCE WILL ACCEPT. WHILE SOME OF THE OLDER, MORE RETIRING PRINCES ARE CONTENT WITH THE WORLD OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE, THIS IS NOT THE CASE WITH MANY OF THE YOUNGER, WESTERN EDUCATED AND MORE WORLDLY MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY. FOR SOME, THERE IS SIMPLY NO MOTIVATION TO SPEND LONG HOURS TENDING AFTER FAMILY BUSINESS INTERESTS. FOR OTHERS, DEALING DIRECTLY IN BUSINESS IS DEMEANING. FOR STILL OTHERS, THERE IS A YEARNING FOR BIGGER, MORE IMPORTANT TASKS.

¶20. THROUGHOUT HISTORY, MILITARY SERVICE HAS BEEN AN ACCEPTABLE OCCUPATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE NOBILITY. DEFENSE OF THE FAITH AND THE NATION, HONOR AND GLORY, PRIDE AND ALL THE OTHER MANIFESTATIONS OF MILITARY SERVICE PERMIT PRINCES TO JOIN THE ARMED FORCES ALONG WITH THEIR COMMONER COUNTRYMEN. WHILE THE PREPONDERANCE OF PRINCES ARE IN THE SALF AND RSAF, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF REASONS WHY THIS SHOULD BE THE CASE. IN A COUNTRY WITH LITTLE IN THE WAY OF EXCITING DIVERSIONS, FLYING AN F-15 OR AN F-5 WITH THE POTENTIAL OF ENGAGING IN AERIAL COMBAT IS VERY STIMULATING. VIRTUALLY ALL THE PRINCES IN THE RSAF ARE PILOTS. TWO FIGHTER BASES ARE COMMANDED BY PRINCES. THEIR ACCESS TO THE BEST EDUCATION, THEIR LEADERSHIP ADVANTAGES AND THE BASIC ABILITY OF MANY OF THE RSAF PRINCES ALL MAKE THEIR APPOINTMENT TO LEADERSHIP POSITIONS A LOGICAL OUTCOME OF SERVICE.

¶21. SERVICE IN THE LAND FORCES GROWS OUT OF A LONG TRADITION OF GROUND COMBAT. THE VIEW AMONG THE BEDOUIN OF SAUDI ARABIA IS THAT SERVICE IN THE "GROUND GAINING ARMS" OF THE MILITARY, WHETHER FOR DEFENSE, OR IN OLDER TIMES FOR THE HONOR IT WAS POSSIBLE TO ACQUIRE IN THE ONCE PERENNIAL RAIDING, IS THE MOST HONORED FORM OF MILITARY SERVICE. IF MANY OF THE MORE EDUCATED, COSMOPOLITAN SAUDIS, PRINCES AND COMMONERS, ARE FINDING THE OTHER BRANCHES OF SERVICE--AIR FORCE, NAVY AND AIR DEFENSE--EQUALLY ATTRACTIVE, FAMILY AND SOCIAL PRESSURE STILL FORCE MANY OF THOSE WHO DO ENTER MILITARY SERVICE TO ENTER THE LAND FORCES AND SANG. RELUCTANT AS SOME MAY BE TO JOIN, SERVICE IN THE SANG CAN AMOUNT TO A FAMILY OBLIGATION FOR FAVORS GIVEN OR EXPECTED IN THE FUTURE. AT THE SAME TIME, SANG OFFICERS AUTOMATICALLY INCUR A DEBT OF LOYALTY TO CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH. THIS REQUIREMENT PROBABLY



KEEPS PRINCES WHOSE FAMILY LOYALTIES ARE TO OTHER SECTORS OF THE FAMILY, OUT OF THE SANG.

122. JOINING THE ARMED FORCES CARRIES WITH IT A NUMBER OF OBVIOUS BENEFITS. A NUMBER OF PRINCES HAVE USED MILITARY SERVICE TO ESTABLISH THEIR CREDENTIALS AS CAPABLE LEADERS AND HAVE GONE ON TO OTHER CAREERS IN GOVERNMENT. OTHERS SEEM INCLINED TO GO FROM THE MILITARY INTO BUSINESS HAVING MADE LUCRATIVE CONTACTS OR BEGUN THEIR FORTUNES IN OTHER WAYS WHILE IN THE SERVICE. OTHERS STAY IN THE SERVICE BALANCING MILITARY DUTY WITH PRIVATE ENTERPRISE. HOWEVER, ONE FACT STANDS OUT ABOVE ALL THE REST--MILITARY SERVICE IS NO BAR TO GETTING WEALTHY. MANY OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN HAVE AMASSED GREAT FORTUNES THROUGH THE MEDIUM OF MILITARY SERVICE. UNTIL RECENTLY, MODA WAS A SEEMINGLY INEXHAUSTIBLE SOURCE OF CONTRACTS, PROJECTS, PROCUREMENT ACTIONS AND BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES. WITH NO ENFORCEMENT OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAWS AGAINST PRINCES, MEMBERS OF THE MILITARY, TOGETHER WITH THEIR CIVILIAN RELATIVES, TAPPED THIS VAST RESERVE OF FUNDS. FOR PRINCES, THE INSIDE TRACK PROVIDED BY THEIR FAMILY CONNECTION HAS MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR THEM TO OUTSHINE ALL THEIR NON-ROYAL COLLEAGUES. THE HIGHER IN RANK, THE BIGGER THE OPPORTUNITIES.

123. SOME OFFICERS, SUCH AS COL TURKI BIN NASSIR, BASE COMMANDER AT DHAHRAN AND SON OF NASSIR BIN ABDUL AZIZ, HAVE MADE NO SECRET OF THEIR BUSINESS ACTIVITIES. AMONG HIS INTERESTS ARE SEVERAL BUSINESSES IN WHICH THE F-15 SQUADRON COMMANDER LTC MANSOUR BIN BANDAR, ANOTHER PRINCE, IS HIS PARTNER. OTHER PRINCES, SUCH AS THE FORMER RSAF DIRECTOR OF AIR OPERATIONS, BG FAHD BIN ABDULLAH BIN MUHAMMED BIN SAUD AL KABIR, AND HIS YOUNGER UNCLE, BG FAYSAL BIN MUHAMMED BIN SAUD AL KABIR, CONDUCT BUSINESS THROUGH RELATIVES OR OTHER SURROGATES OUTSIDE THE MILITARY. WHILE FAYSAL, HEAD OF ARMY AVIATION, APPEARS TO OWN ONLY A TRAFFIC LIGHT COMPANY, IN REALITY HE IS TIED THROUGH HIS BROTHERS INTO MANY ESTABLISHMENTS DIRECTLY RELATED NOT ONLY TO ARMY AVIATION BUT ALSO OTHER MILITARY AREAS FROM WHICH HE TOO IS PROFITING. LTC MANSOUR BIN BANDAR, THE COMMANDER OF THE F-15 SQUADRON AT THE DHAHRAN AIR BASE, RECENTLY DECLINED A TRANSFER WHICH WOULD HAVE MADE HIM BASE COMMANDER IN TAIF. THE REPORTED REASON FOR THIS REFUSAL WAS THE REQUIREMENT TO GIVE UP PERSONAL CONTROL OF HIS BUSINESS OPERATIONS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE.

124. MINDEF SULTAN'S SON, BG KHALID BIN SULTAN, IS THE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL SAUDI AIR DEFENSE FORCES. IN HIS ROLE AS DEPUTY COMMANDER, KHALID HAS PROFITED SMARTLY FROM THE VARIOUS WEAPONS DEALS HE HAS HELPED ENGINEER. REPORTEDLY, BOTH KHALID AND HIS FATHER OBTAINED HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED DEAL TO PURCHASE SHAHINE MISSILES FROM THE FRENCH. OTHER PRINCES HAVE PROFITED BY WRITING THE SPECIFICATIONS NEEDED FOR A PARTICULAR WEAPON OR SERVICE TO FIT A PARTICULAR COMPANY'S OFFER OR THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR COMPETITIVE RUNOFFS. OFTEN, AS FOR EXAMPLE IN THE CASE OF A LARGE FOOD SERVICE COMPANY SUPPORTING MODA, THE OWNER CAN BESTOW THE CONTRACT ON HIMSELF, IN THIS CASE, VICE DEFENSE MINISTER ABDUL RAHMAN. INSIDE TRADING IS A COMMON PRACTICE. SINCE THERE ARE NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST WORRIES, THE PRINCES OFTEN ACT WITH IMPUNITY. A NUMBER OF PRINCES ARE MANEUVERING ACTIVELY FOR A PIECE OF THE PEACE SHIELD OFFSET PACKAGE. SOME HAVE ARRANGED THE PLACEMENT OF PERSONAL EMPLOYEES WITH COMPANIES THEY THOUGHT WOULD GET A PIECE OF THE ACTION.

125. DESPITE AL SAUD PREOCCUPATION WITH IT, MONEY IS NOT THE ONLY ATTRACTION FOUND IN MILITARY SERVICE. WHILE SOME PRINCES DEVOTE THEMSELVES ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO SELF ENRICHMENT, AND OTHERS, LIKE THE SAUD AL KABIR, CONTENT THEMSELVES WITH MONEY AS A HANDSOME SIDELINE

TO THEIR MILITARY CAREERS, OTHERS HAVE HIGHER ASPIRATIONS. THE MILITARY CAN BE A STEPPING STONE TO BIGGER THINGS. IT IS CLEARLY NOT A DISADVANTAGE. AMONG THE MOST OBVIOUS EXAMPLES ARE THAT OF BANDAR BIN SULTAN, ANOTHER SON OF THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND MITIEB BIN ABDULLAH, SON OF THE CROWN PRINCE. BANDAR WAS DOUBTLESS A BUSINESSMAN WHEN HE WAS IN UNIFORM. FOR THAT MATTER, HE STILL IS INVOLVED IN BUSINESSES HE HAD WHEN F-15 COMMANDER IN DHAHRAN. HOWEVER, HE IS ALSO A VERY AMBITIOUS MAN WHO ASPIRES TO DOING GREAT THINGS FOR HIS COUNTRY. BANDAR WAS QUICK TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY THE ARMS SALE DEBATE IN THE U.S. IN THE EARLY 80'S. HE QUICKLY BECAME AN ARTICULATE SPOKESMAN FOR HIS COUNTRY'S MILITARY POLICY NEEDS. HIS FAMILY CREDENTIALS AND POLITICAL ACUMEN ENABLED HIM TO GAIN ACCESS TO THE KING'S EAR AND HIS PERSONAL CHARM AND ABILITY EARNED HIM THE KING'S ATTENTION. NOW AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES AND SOMETIMES MIDDLE EAST NEGOTIATOR FOR THE KING, BANDAR IS RUMORED TO BE HEADING FOR AN EVEN LARGER FOREIGN POLICY ROLE. ABDULLAH'S SON, MITIEB, IS ALSO A VERY AMBITIOUS MAN. USING HIS POSITION AS SON OF THE SANG COMMANDER, MITIEB HAS QUICKLY RISEN IN RANK, FAR FASTER THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE ORGANIZATION. HE ANSWERS ONLY TO HIS FATHER AND PERHAPS HIS FATHER'S MOST SENIOR ADVISOR. MITIEB IS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE MILITARY LIFE, HOWEVER. REPORTEDLY, HE IS ANXIOUS FOR A ROLE SIMILAR TO THAT OF BANDAR. IF AND WHEN HIS FATHER BECOMES KING, MITIEB MAY WELL GET HIS WISH. SOME OTHERS WHO HAVE MOVED ON ARE LISTED IN LAST SECTION OF LIST PROVIDED IN PARA 4. THE VERY FACT THAT A NUMBER OF PRINCES HAVE MOVED ON FROM APPARENTLY SUCCESSFUL MILITARY CAREERS TENDS TO FAVOR THE VIEW THAT THE ROYAL FAMILY IS NOT THAT CONCERNED WITH THE PRINCELY PRESENCE IN THE MILITARY.

¶26. REGARDLESS OF THEIR REASON FOR BEING THERE, THE FINAL KEY QUESTION IS: WHAT IMPACT DOES THE ROYAL CONNECTION HAVE ON THE ARMED FORCES? COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PRINCES AND THEIR COMMONER COLLEAGUES ARE ESTABLISHED BY PRINCE SULTAN AND PRINCE ABDULLAH. IN THE SANG, NONE OF THE PRINCES APPEAR TO ANSWER TO ANYONE BUT THE CROWN PRINCE OR HIS MOST SENIOR DEPUTY. HOWEVER, THE SANG IS SMALL, IS MORE ABDULLAH'S PRIVATE DOMAIN, AND ITS UNIQUE TRIBAL ORIENTATION MAKES THE PLACE OF PRINCES (ESPECIALLY PRINCES RELATED TO ABDULLAH) MORE SECURE. IN MODA, PRINCES ARE USUALLY IN A POSITION TO TAKE ORDERS FROM COMMONERS. OFFICIAL POLICY SAYS THEY ARE TO BE TREATED ACCORDING TO THEIR RANK. BUT THE REAL RELATIONSHIP IS UNCLEAR. A PRINCE HAS DIRECT ACCESS TO THE TOP, EITHER PERSONALLY OR THROUGH HIS FAMILY. THE HIGHER THE PRINCE, THE EASIER IT IS FOR HIM TO GET HIS OWN WAY IN A DISPUTE. WE DO NOT HEAR, HOWEVER, OF MANY DISPUTES WHICH REQUIRE ROYAL SETTLEMENT FROM ABOVE. WE KNOW OF RIVALRIES BUT NOT OPEN INSUBORDINATION. IT IS PROBABLE THAT ANY PRINCE WHO CANNOT GET ALONG IN MODA IS QUIETLY MOVED OUT. WHILE STORIES AROUND AS TO THE ACTUAL REASON, BG FAHD BIN ABDULLAH'S RECENT RETIREMENT WAS REPORTEDLY DUE IN PART TO THE PERSONAL POWER HE HAD ACQUIRED OVER RECENT YEARS, POWER WHICH SOMETIMES APPEARED TO EXCEED THAT OF HIS NOMINAL BOSS, THE RSAF COMMANDER. (WHETHER OR NOT THIS PROMPTED HIS PROMOTION/REMOVAL IS UNCLEAR. MOST OBSERVERS AGREE HIS COMING IS AT LEAST A BENEFIT TO CIVIL AVIATION AND A TECHNICAL PROMOTION.)

¶27. BUT TIGHT MILITARY DISCIPLINE IS NOT REALLY IN THE SAUDI TRADITION--FOR COMMONERS AS WELL AS ROYALTY. SAUDI SOCIETY REMAINS CLOSE TO THE STRONG BEDOUIN ETHIC OF FIERCE PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE AND STRONG, FAMILY/CLAN ORIENTED LOYALTY. WHILE NOT OBVIOUS, EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING HAS ITS PLACE IN THE ORDER OF IMPORTANCE. LOYALTY IS FIRST TO ONE'S FATHER AND THEN TO A LESSER DEGREE, TO OTHER PERSONS, INSTITUTIONS AND PURSUITS. IN THE ARMED FORCES,

THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE REDUCTION OF WHAT ARE ELSEWHERE STRICT MILITARY REGULATIONS INTO THE LEAST RESTRICTIVE, LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR. WESTERN CONCEPTS OF MILITARY DISCIPLINE AS APPLIED IN THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMED FORCES ARE LIBERAL, AND TO OUTSIDERS OFTEN SEEM PATENTLY INEFFECTIVE. SOLDIERS ON GUARD DUTY CAN BE SEEN WITHOUT LACES IN THEIR SHOES OR OUT OF PROPER UNIFORM IN SOME OTHER WAY. ALTHOUGH FORBIDDEN BY REGULATIONS, SOLDIERS AND SAILORS CAN STILL BE SEEN LEAVING THEIR OFFICES AT 2:00 PM (DAY'S END) AND GETTING INTO THEIR TAXI CABS TO BEGIN A SECOND OCCUPATION.

128. DESPITE OFFICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS TO THE CONTRARY, WITH NO EQUALITY BETWEEN PRINCES AND OFFICERS OF EQUAL RANK, LARGE DISPARITY IN PAY AND ALLOWANCES (PRINCES GET A ROYAL STIPEND OF AROUND USD 120,000 PER YEAR, DEPENDING ON PLACE IN THE FAMILY), AND A VAST ARRAY OF PREREQUISITES SUCH AS FREE USE OF GOVERNMENT OWNED AIRCRAFT, HOMES, ETC., IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT THEY ARE RELATIVELY ISOLATED FROM THEIR COMMONER COLLEAGUES WITHIN THE MILITARY. PRINCES ASSOCIATE VERY LITTLE OUTSIDE THEIR OWN CIRCLES, BUT THIS INDEED IS THE CASE WITH FAMILIES IN THE REST OF SAUDI SOCIETY. HOWEVER, WHAT THIS MEANS FOR THE ARMED FORCES IS THAT THE BONDS OF COMRADESHIP ARE VIRTUALLY NON-EXISTENT. WHILE PRINCES HAVE, THROUGH THEIR PERSONAL CONNECTIONS, THE ABILITY TO EXERT PRESSURE ON BEHALF OF THEIR UNITS, INFLUENCE IS THE WAY VIRTUALLY EVERYTHING IS MOVED IN THE SAUDI BUREAUCRACY AND NOT MUCH CREDIT IS GIVEN FOR DOING SOMETHING WHICH IS EXPECTED. THE PRESENCE OF A PRINCE IN THE UNIT IS THEREFORE NOT NECESSARILY A BOON TO MORALE.

129. THE MISSION IS AWARE OF COMPLAINTS AMONG COMMONER OFFICERS ABOUT THE OBVIOUS PRIVILEGES AND EXCESSIVE GREED OF ROYAL FAMILY MEMBERS. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN QUIET GRUMBLING ABOUT EXCESSIVE ADVANCEMENT, SUCH AS IN THE CASE OF CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH'S SON MITIEB. WHILE OFFICERS WILL MOST GENERALLY WITHHOLD THEIR COMMENTS FROM FOREIGNERS, THE FACT THAT A FEW HAVE BEEN WILLING TO SPEAK IS PROBABLY INDICATIVE OF WIDER, PRIVATE ATTITUDES IN THE OFFICER CORPS. (THERE IS NO PROVISION FOR COMPLAINTS SUCH AS THESE AND THEREFORE, IF THEY ARE WIDESPREAD, THEY ARE PROBABLY VOICED ONLY AMONG CONFIDANTS. WE KNOW OF CASES IN WHICH OFFICERS WITH OUTSPOKEN OPINIONS HAVE BEEN MOVED TO ATTACHE POSITIONS OUT OF THE COUNTRY, BEEN GIVEN RETIREMENT, OR BEEN SECONDED TO NON-MILITARY, GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.) PERHAPS THE EVIDENCE OF CAUTION OF MOVING PRINCES TO THE MOST SENIOR POSITIONS INDICATES SOME ROYAL FAMILY AWARENESS OF THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS IN TERMS OF OFFICER CORPS MORALE IF THEIR OWN ARE PUSHED TOO FAR. THE SANG APPEARS TO BE LESS AFFECTED THAN MODA AND MORE RELAXED ABOUT THE PRINCELY ROLE.

130. OVERALL, PRINCES DO NOT APPEAR TO HELP OR HARM THE CAPABILITY OF THE ARMED FORCES. WHILE IT IS DEBATABLE HOW MUCH THEIR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AFFECT MORALE, THEIR ABILITY TO CUT THROUGH RED TAPE AND FACILITATE MATTERS ON BEHALF OF THEIR UNITS SHOULD HELP OFFSET AT LEAST ANY NEGATIVE FEELINGS. WHILE SOME MAY COME IN FOR CRITICISM, THE PROVEN ABILITY OF OTHERS HAS CERTAINLY BEEN RECOGNIZED AND LEADERS SUCH AS COL. MITIEB, OVERALL, ARE RESPECTED BY THEIR COLLEAGUES AND SUBORDINATES. HOWEVER, THE FINANCIAL ADVANTAGES WHICH ONCE FELL TO EVERYONE WITH A LITTLE IMAGINATION ARE DWINDLING FAST. SOON, THE CASE MAY BE THAT ONLY PRINCES WILL HAVE THE CLOUT, ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND OPERATING LATITUDE TO MAKE IT RICH. IF THIS OCCURS, THEIR PLACE IN THE MILITARY MAY BECOME MORE CONTROVERSIAL.

131. THE MERE PRESENCE OF PRINCES IN THE ARMED FORCES PROVIDES SOME DEGREE OF STABILITY TO THE AL SAUD REGIME. REGARDLESS OF THEIR MOTIVES IN ENTERING THE MILITARY, THEIR OVERSIGHT CAPABILITY AND

INFLUENCE ON EVENTS IN THE MILITARY MUST INEVITABLY HAVE SOME EFFECT ON UNIT PERSONNEL. AND INEVITABLY, EVEN IF LINKS TO THE SENIOR PRINCES ARE WEAK, THERE MUST BE SOME FEEDBACK ON MILITARY ATTITUDES FROM THE PRINCELY PRESENCE. WHETHER OR NOT A PRINCE IMPROVES OR DETRACTS FROM THE MORALE OR CAPABILITY OF HIS UNIT IS MORE OR LESS DEPENDENT ON HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD THE PROFESSION AND HIS PERSONAL INTERESTS. HOWEVER, HIS PRIMARY BENEFIT TO THE REGIME, WHETHER BY DESIGN OR NOT, IS THE ROYAL PRESENCE HIS ASSIGNMENT BRINGS.

SUDDARTH